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Early Literature of the Germans.

AGE OF THE MINNE-SINGERS.

THE history of literature exhibits not a phenomenon more interesting and attractive to the philosopher and the philologist, than the day of poetic glory which Germany enjoyed, during the period named at the head of this article. In the suddenness and brilliancy of its developements it resembled the coruscant splendors of the aurora borealis, which sometimes envelopes the heavens, from the horizon to the zenith, in one glow of rosy light. And though its time of continuance was not as brief, it was yet like it also in this, that it broke forth from the darkness of night, and when its brightness had faded away, the darkness remained. It brought not lasting day-light: for a while it illumined the gloom of night: but its departing glories were yet for a season reflected by the darkening sky, when Germany's long array of Minne-singers, "her bards of hall and bower, were, in an evil hour, superseded by her burgher poets, the Meister-singers of the guilds or fraternities."

The age of the Minne-singers, extending from the year 1137 to the accession of Rudolph of Hapsburg, comprises a period of 136 years.

Minna is the old German word for love and friendship. And, as the joys of pure and virtuous love and faithful friendship were the principal subjects which the poets of this period celebrated in their glowing song, they were designated by the common appellation of Minne-singers. The poets were chiefly knights, or yet noblemen, whose poetic life, divided between chivalrous exploits, devotion, and the pure attachments and gentle endearments of social intercourse, inspired them to song. They sang, for the most part, at the courts of German princes, who favored literature and art, and among whom the emperor Frederic II, Duke Leopold IV, of Austria, and Landgrave Hermann of Thurengia, hold an eminent rank. Their poems will ever be deservedly admired for the tenderness and magnificence, the simple but fervid eloquence and the finished neatness which distinguished them.

Before we proceed to a more particular examination of this interesting period in the life and growth of the German muse, it may be well to say a word on the influence which the poetic fire of the Minne-singers exerted on the language of their country.—That this was, in every respect, favorable, cannot be asserted. It tended, no doubt, to enrich the language, to develope its resources,

to unfold its powers, to extend its compass, and thus to raise its character and increase its respectability. But language, when considered only externally, in its exterior mechanism, is purely a system of sounds, adapted to imbody or shadow forth the impressions, the thoughts, the discoveries, the feelings of the inward man.—Where the progress of mind is regular, advancing with sure and steady gait, under the genial influence of causes, unfluctuating and permanent as the quickening warmth of heaven's vernal sun, this system will develope itself gradually, regularly, according to the strict and stable laws, which govern the movements of the mind, on whose growth and increasing wants that developement depends. But, in the case before us, the German mind was suddenly and powerfully acted upon by extraneous causes, among which the poetry of the Troubadours was the mightiest: producing, indeed, an effect no less startling and vivid than would ensue, if the heats of summer were suddenly poured upon our forests and plains in the midst of winter. The influence, therefore, of which I speak, was, however genial in many respects, not only new and sudden in its action, but extraordinary, all-pervading, altogether marvellous in its effects. It wrought not a gentle change in the literature of Germany, but a revolution. And as this owed its origin and progress chiefly to foreign causes, calculated to act only on the gifted few, with whose rapid strides the public mind was not prepared to keep pace, it failed of producing a permanent effect on the people, or of giving a steady impulse to the popular literature of Germany.

And if this mighty influence, like the touch of Midas, changed every thing into gold that came within its reach, its transforming power extended also to things, which might have been the better for a gentler process, and these were the words and forms of the language. Every revolution is violent. And though it may end with giving us something better in the place of the old regime, much that is valuable and beautiful, honored and worthy of honor, is mutilated or lost in the vortex of its rapid and violent processes of developement. And thus it fared with the German language, with its forms and inflections, and particularly with its ancient venerable conjugation of the verbs, which, in the remnants that survive in the modern German, our modern grammarians, in the plenitude of their wisdom, have presumed to style irregular. We do not assert that through this revolution the German language lost in originality of character, in power, in copiousness of resources.—But much of the character which was stamped upon its uncultivated and vigorous youth, was changed, and the course of its developement ran in channels different from those in which it would have naturally flowed, and often the progress of these was abrupt and startling, like that of the stream which breaks over sharp stones, and plunges over rugged rocks.

The influence of such revolutions is arbitrary, and with arbitrary and capricious sway, the presiding genius changes or produces words, invents or alters or inverts inflections, casts ancient forms into new moulds, and throws away what fails to captivate his fancy. Words cease to be the living representatives of their constituents, speaking with eloquent sound to the understanding and the heart; for artificial forms come into the place of those which nature moulded, the etymology of a vast number of words is irrecoverably lost, expletives, unnecessary words and synonymes are introduced. That the German, like most or all other modern languages, has experienced such a revolution, affecting its external character and hence its relations to the thoughts and feelings which it represents, will become evident to every critical student of that language. How far the tendencies of this revolution were for the better, how far for the worse, who will decide?

Some of our readers may desire to see our assertions illustrated by examples; and we cannot refuse to comply with a demand so reasonable. But as we profess to be merely the humble historian of interesting periods of German literature, we hope to be pardoned for being very brief. It is necessary to premise, that the language of the period under consideration, was that which is known as Mittel-Teutsch, the German of the middle ages. For the changes which words suffered in their form, the reader is, therefore, referred to the tabular view presented in our first article.

It has already been hinted that the revolution of which we are speaking, affected particularly the inflections of the language.— The internal case-inflection of the nouns was either very much altered, or entirely done away. This will appear from the following example: In the old High-German the word Frau had Vrouva in the nominative, and Vrouvun in the other cases of the singular. The plural had Vrouvun in the nominative and accusative, Vrouvono in the genitive and Vrouvom in the dative. In the Middle-German this word is Frau, and its form of declension was altered into Frauen in all the oblique cases of the singular, and in all the cases of the plural. Masculine and neuter nouns, also had, in the plural, an internal case-inflection, e. g. Weg had in the nominative and accusative plural Wega, genitive Wego, dative Wegum. The common termination of the plural of nouns was e, and the use of the genitive case was remarkably frequent.

The old High-German, like the Latin and other ancient languages, formed all the tenses of the verb by internal flexion: but during the period under consideration, as all the poems of the Minne-singers prove, the auxiliaries, haben and seyn, to have and to be, were introduced, and the old conjugation lost. The verbs received, in all their tenses, the prefix ge, and in many the second and third person had no distinctive final syllable. In the construction of sentences, this period delighted in strange transpositions of

the article, in ellipses and inversions, decided departures from the earlier simplicity.

But we gladly turn from these details to more interesting matters, and proceed to inquire briefly into the causes which induced the great and remarkable improvement in the state of German poetry, displayed in the productions of the Minne-singers. It commenced under the Suabian emperors of the house of Hohenstaufen, the first of whom, Conrad III, ascended the Imperial throne of Germany, A. D. 1138.

And we here mention first, that previous to the accession of Conrad, the state of the German language had been, for some time, undergoing gradual but important improvements: so that probably the gifted minds and enterprising genius of the Minne-singers, in some respects only, hastened and matured developements, which they found in an incipient state. Between the death of Charlemagne and Conrad's accession to the throne, a period of more than three hundred years had intervened. During this period the language had made, indeed, but little progress, yet much of its asperity and harshness had disappeared, and an increased flexibility had already rendered it better adapted to purposes of a higher and more refined nature. The many harsh and grating sounds, the foreign words which had crept in; the strange combinations which had abounded, and render the reading of the earlier literary monuments so difficult, had gradually disappeared to make room for better and more pleasant things. Hence Willeram, and the unknown eulogist of arch-bishop Hanno, had, as early as the close of the period preceding the present, written poetry in a language more soft and melodious, and intelligible, without much extraneous aid. But with the beginning of the reign of the Suabian emperors, the Frank dialect, which had long been the dominant one, was entirely merged in its kindred dialect, the Suabian or Allemannic. This now became, throughout the whole of civilized Germany, the language of the court and of books, and this dignity it retained, down to the reformation of the church. The new Suabian German readily assimilated the imperfect and unsettled cultivation of the Frank dialect, and improved and refined it, to meet the demands of the newly excited poetic spirit. The Suabian dialect was richer in vowels, particles, prepositions and ellipses, more susceptible of derivations and compounds, and hence better calculated to subserve the manifold and high purposes of poetry. It afforded the poet a more plastic material, in which to imbody the engaging simplicity, the ingenuous enthusiasm, and the tender emotions of his heart.

Another cause which materially promoted the wonderful developements of this period, were the crusades. These wars were undertaken for the merest phantom, but one pre-eminently calculated to dazzle and attract in those times, to give a powerful impulse to

the mind of a nation, which had for a long time been strongly affected by all the excitements which prevailed among its southern and western neighbors. On these warlike pilgrimages the Germans mingled with the sprightly Frenchmen and the imaginative Italians, of whom the latter, by reason of the wealth of their cities, Venice, Genoa and Pisa, had attained to considerable refinement in manners: they visited Constantinople, that asylum of ancient art and urbanity, and thence arrived in that wonderful land of prophecy and its triumphant fulfilment, the scene of the greatest events in human history, abounding in sacred tradition and marvellous legend, and thus disclosing to the observing Germans a whole world of new phenomena and unknown sensations. Thus these pilgrimages, called forth by superstitious zeal, and conducted by wild enthusiasm, became an occasion to the Germans not only of improving and refining their manners, of extending their knowledge, of purifying and elevating their taste, but served more particularly to rouse and kindle their imagination, and to excite that spirit of romance and of mystical devotion, which is so favorable to poetry. A third circumstance favorable to literature was the increased wealth of the Germans, and the prosperous state of affairs prevailing throughout the country. The crusades had introduced the love of splendor at the courts of princes. Delighted and charmed by the refinement and arts of the East, they were incited to adorn their capitals with magnificent buildings, and to favor and patronize all who engaged in the pursuits of science or the cultivation of the arts. The middle class of citizens acquired greater liberties and important privileges, the cities became populous, arts, manufactures and commerce began to flourish, and to raise the wealth and prosperity of the country. The influence which such a state of affairs is calculated to exert on the literary character of a nation, is obvious to every mind.

But besides these general causes which brought on what is deservedly styled the golden age of romantic and heroic song in Germany, a few, more directly and intimately connected with this result, must be mentioned. As much as a century before this bright period dawned upon Germany, southern France had begun to resound with the gladsome strain of its Troubadours. These, known by the title of "the Provencal Poets," made love and the chivalrous exploits of brave knights, the subjects of their song, and their productions were soon recognized as models of a more versatile and elevated order of poetry. Soon the fame and melody of their song extended to Suabia, i. e. into ancient Allemannia and the adjoining part of Switzerland. This came the more readily to pass, as Provence and the German empire were then yet connected by political and social sympathies, in consequence of their having like feudal organizations. And, as was to be expected, this species of poetry, novel, stirring, and employed in the praise of life's most generous and tender relations, excited the enthusiasm

and admiration of the Germans, awakened their minds to enjoyments, ere then untasted, and roused all their powers from their long slumber.

But, what rendered this effect deeper, more lasting and extensive than it could otherwise have been, was the protection and favor which poets found at court. The Suabian emperors were liberal patrons of German, as well as Provencial and Tuscan poetry. Frederic I, with whom the brightest period of this golden age commenced, drew a number of Troubadours to his court, and is himself the author of some poems in the Provencial language.—The example of the emperors naturally incited other princes to imitate them, and the feudal lords and barons, the stalwart and bold defenders of their citadels and fastnesses, became the votaries or friends and protectors of the muses. History tells of the poetical games or contests which were instituted, and how the victors were crowned by the most distinguished ladies, then the proudest meed of superiority in this intellectual warfare. Poetry was, indeed, at that time, regarded as the very spice of social intercourse, and the chief enjoyment of German princes.

And can we, while enumerating the causes that brought this joyous day over Germany, forget the influence which christianity must have exerted on its warmhearted people, whose intensiveness of character and generous ardor of feeling, have ever disposed them to the mysticisms of sentiment, and to ideal imaginings amid the realities of life? In the strains of the Minne-singers was heard the first rapturous and hearty outbreak of that spirit of universal love, which christianity enjoins and infuses, and which, by its pure and sacred fire, had renovated and elevated all the social relations and institutions of the land. Hence the sweet songs of the Troubadours, celebrating the pleasures of friendship, the joys of love, and the honors of chivalry, whose highest duties were the protection and defence of the weak and oppressed, found a chord in the German heart, that was sure to respond in full, melodious tones. And when the warmth and vigor of German feeling, purified and exalted by the influence of christianity, made these grateful subjects the burden of new and untried song, the character of these lays of the Minne-singers made it manifest that a new spirit was abroad in the land, the spirit of the Gospel, the spirit of chaste and virtuous love. And here we cannot but note the difference, as respects purity and chasteness of thought and sentiment, which obtained between the Provencial and German poets; the latter delighting in all that is honorable and generous in the subjects of their muse, and leaving to the prurient fancy of the former the unenviable distinction of seeking impurities in relations, where it is sad indeed that they should ever be found. In respect, too, of the comparative merits, merely in a literary point of view, of the Troubadours and the Minne-singers, we heartily agree with the translator of Sismondi, who says in a note: "In comparing the

poetic merits of the Troubadours and Minne-singers, it seems impossible to avoid differing from the opinion expressed by M. de Sismondi, and awarding the palm to the latter. They partake very little of the metaphysical speculations and refinements of the Troubadours, while the harmony and grace of their versification are pre-eminent. The unbounded gayety with which it revels in the charms of nature, and the spirit of tenderness and affection which it displays, give their poetry charms which very seldom adorn that of their rivals." Vol. I, p. 88. We cannot resist the temptation to insert here, from the same note, the following very closely translated song of Earl Conrad of Kirchberg, a distinguished Minne-singer:

I.

May, sweet May, again is come;
May, that frees the land from gloom:
Children, children, up and see
All her stores of jollity!
O'er the laughing hedgerow's side
She hath spread her treasures wide;
She is in the greenwood shade,
Where the nightingale hath made
Every branch and every tree
Ring with her sweet melody:
Hill and dale are May's own treasures;
Youth, rejoice in sportive measures;
Sing ye! join the chorus gay!
Hail this merry, merry May!

II.

Up, then, children, we will go
Where the blooming roses grow;
In a joyful company
We the bursting flowers will see;
Up! your festal dress prepare!
Where gay hearts are meeting, there
May hath pleasures most inviting,
Heart, and sight, and ear delighting:
Listen to the bird's sweet song,
Hark! how soft it floats along!
Courtly dames our pleasures share,
Never saw I May so fair;
Therefore, dancing will we go:
Youths rejoice, the flowrets blow;
Sing ye! join the chorus gay!
Hail this merry, merry May!

III.

Our manly youths,--where are they now?
Bid them up, and with us go
To the sporters on the plain.
Bid adieu to care and pain,
Now, thou pale and wounded lover!
Thou thy peace shalt soon recover;
Many a laughing lip and eye
Speaks the light heart's gayety.
Lovely flowers around we find,
In the smiling verdure twined,
Richly steeped in May dews glowing;
Youths! rejoice, the flowers are blowing:
Sing ye! join the chorus gay!
Hail this merry, merry May!

IV.

Oh, if to my love restored,
Her, o'er all her sex adored,
What supreme delight were mine!
How would care her sway resign!
Merrily, in the bloom of May,
I would weave a garland gay;
Better than the best is she,
Purer than all purity!
For her spotless self alone,
I will sing this changeless one;
Thankful or unthankful, she
Shall my song, my idol be.
Youths, then, join the chorus gay!
Hail this merry, merry May!

We have thus mentioned the principal causes, to whose combined influence Germany is indebted for those sweet lays of hall and bower, whose authors have gained universal admiration and literary immortality, under the title of Minne-singers, which name they obtained from this circumstance, that love was the prominent subject of their muse. Yet this favorite subject was by many left entirely unsung, for some wrote fables, others sacred hymns; some made chivalry the subject of romantic tales, and others composed heroic poems.

The works of these poets bear a deep impress of the beautiful simplicity of manners, peculiar to those times. There is no systematic and artificial stiffness, no solemn pedantry about their productions. They were unsophisticated children of nature, and amid simple and honorable pursuits, and genial circumstances, and innocent pleasure of social intercourse, their character had been developed and their tastes formed; and the spirit which they had thus imbibed, their love of nature, their enthusiastic devotedness to the tenderest ties and the gentlest endearments of social life, speaks out in all their glowing song. They were a pure and noble race of poets, worthy sons of Germany, the mother of a numerous and vigorous offspring; and their lyre was strung when that mother was yet in the days of her native simplicity, ere foreign fashions and follies and vices had brought corruptions into her heart, and led many of her most gifted children to sacrifice and worship at impure and unholy shrines.

For a long time the works of the Minne-singers had fallen into unmerited forgetfulness, from which they were again rescued about the middle of the last century, when a collection of the Mss. of 140 poets was discovered at Paris. When once the attention of the learned had been directed to these treasures of early literature, similar discoveries were soon made elsewhere, and a great number of manuscript collections was brought forth from under the accumulated dust of ages. Since then, four voluminous collections of these poems, with notes and dissertations, have appeared in print. The last of these, that of Vanderhagen, is quite recent, and perhaps the most interesting, as the poems which it contains belong to the brightest period of that brilliant age.

The number of Minne-singers, whose names and honors have come down to posterity, and of whom some were of princely rank, or even members of the imperial family, amounts to 300. But as we cannot here give extracts from their works, and a mere catalogue of names would be useless, we pass on to matters more interesting.

Among the longer poems of this age, which are still extant, the Niebelungen lied occupies the highest ground. It is an epic poem more than 600 years old, and constituting, in connexion with two others, the revenge of Chrimhild and the Lament, a whole of which Conrad von Würzburg was long regarded as the author. But the latest researches, instituted by August Wilhelm von Schlegel, have served to prove from local descriptions contained in the poem, therefore from internal evidence, that either Klingsohr of Hungary, or Heinrich von Ofterdingen, and most probably the latter, is to be considered as its author; though to Conrad v. Würzburg still remains the merit of having been its publisher. The remarkable destinies of the Niebelungen or Niflungen are the subject of this poem. These Niebelungen were a mighty and very ancient race of Burgundian heroes. The poem is undoubtedly founded on different tales and legends, handed down by tradition from an ancient heroic

age, and intermingled in various ways. There is here no room for a detailed analysis. It is supposed, however, that this lay of the Niebelungen and the Heldenbuch, another of these ancient literary monuments, imbody a great deal of the matter contained in the poems which Charlemagne collected and his son destroyed.

The following remarks on this poem we transcribe from an English translation of Frederick Schlegel's "History of literature:"

"That skilful unfolding of incidents and almost dramatic vividness of representation, which form the chief characteristic of the Homeric poems, are qualities which were peculiar to the Greeks, and have never been imitated with much success by the poets of any other people. But among the heroic poems of those of other nations, which have remained satisfied with a more simple mode of of poetry, this German poem claims a very high place—perhaps among all the heroic chivalrous poems of modern Europe it is entitled to the first. It is peculiarly distinguished by its unity of plan; it is a picture, or rather it is a series of successive pictures, each naturally following the other, and all delineated with great boldness and simplicity, and a total disregard of all superfluities. The German language appears in this work in a state of perfection to which, in the subsequent periods of its early history, it had no pretensions. Along with all its natural liveliness and strength, it seems at that time to have possessed a flexibility which soon after gave place to a style of affectation, hardness and perplexity. The heroic legends of all nations have a great deal in common, so far as their essence and purpose are concerned; their variety is only produced by their being imbued with the peculiar feelings, and composed in the peculiar measures of different nations. In the Niebelungen-lied, in the same manner as in the legends of Troy and of Iceland, the interest turns on the fate of a youthful hero, who is represented as invested with all the attributes of beauty, magnanimity and victory—but dearly purchasing all these perishable glories by the certainty of an early and a predicted death. In his person, as is usual, we have a living type both of the splendor and the decline of the heroic world. The poem closes with the description of a great catastrophe, borrowed from a half historical incident in the early traditions of the North. In this respect, also, as in many others, we cannot fail to perceive a resemblance to the Iliad; if the last catastrophe of the German poem be one more tragical, bloody and Titanic, than any thing in Homer, the death of the German hero, on the other hand, has in it more solemnity and stillness, and is withal depicted with more exquisite touches of tenderness than any similar scene in any heroic poem, with which I am acquainted. The Niebelungen-lied is, moreover, a poem abounding in variety; in it both sides of human life, the joyful as well as the sorrowful, are depicted in all their strength.—The promise of the opening stanza is fulfilled:

"I sing of loves and wassellings, if ye will lend your ears,
Of bold men's bloody combatings, and gentle ladies' tears."

We shall close this article with a brief account of a transaction which we could not omit, without passing over an essential feature of the character of the period, of which we are treating. Allusion has already been made to the poetic contests of this period, which sometimes assumed a very serious aspect. The most remarkable of these contests is celebrated in the literary history of Germany, by the name of "The war on the Wartburg." This Wartburg was the famous feudal castle of Landgrave Hermann of Thuringia. The omission of this event would be the less justifiable, that its result was a poem, which is ranked among the greatest dramatic attempts of Germany, although in its form it is wanting in some of the essential attributes of a dramatic work. This poetic contest arose in the year 1206, and the most celebrated poets of that period, Veldeck, Eschilbach, Ofterdingen, Klingsohr, Walter von der Vogelweide, Bieterolf and Reimar the elder, were engaged in it. Heinrich von Ofterdingen gave rise to it, as he introduced in all his poems, the praise of Leopold VII, duke of Austria, at whose court he resided. Excited thereby to emulation, and probably rendered jealous by the distinguished honors of a poet so learned, and gifted with such deep poetic inspiration, five of the poets whom we have just named, ventured to appear in the lists as his opponents, extolling the clemency and valor of Hermann: and thus arose a serious and settled controversy, in which it was agreed by the champions that the defeated should be hanged. And now the strife commenced, and the friends of Hermann at first acquitted themselves manfully and nobly. But the eloquence of Ofterdingen, whose discourse is said to have flowed in a resistless torrent of verse from his lips, compelled all his opponents to be mute. In the midst of the contest, Sophia, the lady of the landgrave, entered the hall. Ofterdingen, who is said to have had a secret attachment for this lady, was so disconcerted by her appearance, that he was vanquished, and the moderators or censors hastened to put the cruel sentence into execution, in compliance with the clamorous demands of his opponents. But the princess, who had a high regard for the discomfited poet, protected and concealed him under her mantle, and enabled him thus to escape. Being himself dissatisfied with this unexpected issue of the contest, Ofterdingen desired that Klingsohr, the most celebrated poet of his time, then residing at the court of Andrew, king of Hungary, might decide betwixt him and his opponents. Klingsohr complied, and arrived on the Wartburg, at the end of the year 1207. After many poetic contests which he here nobly sustained, in the presence of the Landgrave's family, and of a great number of knights, and in which Wolfram von Eschilbach particularly distinguished himself, he gave it as his final decision, that to Ofterdingen belonged the first prize. The latter now succeeded in ef-

fecting a reconciliation with his enraged adversaries, and the landgravine bestowed on Klingsohr a golden chain, to reward him for his magnificent display of poetic talent, and his successful vindication of her favorite poet.*

Here we take leave of this stirring and brilliant period of German literature. That which follows presents a scene far more humble and unadorned.

PAUL AT ATHENS.—A HOMILY.

No one of proper feelings can read without intense interest the account of Paul's preaching in the renowned city of Athens.—Conducted, in the providence of God, to that city, curiosity is naturally awakened to know how he would deport himself, whether he would be able to encounter the circumstances in which he was placed. Creditable to him as a man, honorable to him as a disciple of Jesus of Nazareth, and illustrative of the excellency of christianity, was every thing he said, and every thing he did. Excited by the evidences presented to him in the greatest abundance, that the polished inhabitants of this city, were, in a moral point of view, most deeply degraded—that all their knowledge and philosophy left them victims of the most senseless idolatry, he could not refrain from efforts to lead them to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ. Selecting a position as favorable as possible, surrounded with the choice spirits of the place, he arranges his plan of operation with skill of the highest order, and advances with a firm step to the great object of his heart—the illumination and salvation of his auditors. In the midst of Mars Hill, where the decisions of the far-famed Areopagus were delivered, he said "Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious." This might not appear an exordium sufficiently conciliatory for an orator of such great distinction. The language of Paul somewhat different from that of the translators, is free from repulsiveness, and evinces a happy discrimination, whilst it is calculated to fix the attention without awakening the angry passions. The declaration is that they were excessively devoted to religious worship; that they were not indifferent to the claims of the gods; that they presented many proofs of a desire to fulfil their obligations to the gods many and Lords many whom they regarded as deserving their homage. Had they known the true God and prosecuted with similar zeal his glory, their conduct would have deserved the highest commendation. Unfortunately, their zeal had taken a wrong direction, and therefore produced results deeply to be regretted, conducive neither to their honor nor their welfare.

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* Cf. Heinsius, vol. IV, p. 63.

It was not, however, the design of the Apostle to confine himself to general statements. He fortifies what he utters by the specification—"For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, To the unknown God." His assertion was not gratuitous. He passed through their city. He had enquired with intense interest, what is the religious condition of this people? Not ignorant of their literature—of the influence which Grecian mind had exerted on the world, skilled in their language which was widely diffused amongst men, he examined into their religious character. He looked at their deities, for they were visible. They were of those who have human organs but not sensations—senses, but no perceptions. He looked in upon their deities before whom they bowed down, and he found it most true as has been said—that it is more easy to find a God at Athens than a man; they were therefore more religiously disposed than others, as he had said. Amongst the altars there was one with the inscription, "to the unknown God." To some deity whom they knew not, this altar had been reared. To Paul was known a God who was unknown to the Athenians. It was the only true and living God. Taking occasion from their worship which had respect to this unrevealed Deity, he ingeniously proposes to make known to them the Being whom they ignorantly worshipped. Admirably calculated was this course to predispose them to listen, to awaken their curiosity, and to prepare them to receive the communications which he was so well qualified to make concerning the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

With the way thus prepared, he proceeds to make known the Lord God Almighty. He is the creator of the universe and all things therein; the being at whose command all creation sprang into existence—therefore he is omnipotent in power. No power less than His could command into existence such a universe as that in which we dwell. It is evinced both in the formation of the small and great—insects and Arch Angels. How different this God from those of the heathen! How great is the unknown God, now revealed as the Omnipotent Creator, compared with those they professedly knew! In knowledge, he is as boundless as he is in power. Nothing less than omniscience can be ascribed to him, who having made all things and arranged them for the production of the results which are witnessed, must have been intimately acquainted with all, and consequently immeasurably intelligent.

This God is made known not only as the underived Author omnipotent and omniscient, of all things, but moreover he is the proprietor of all—he is the Lord of Heaven and Earth. They are his. They are subject to his control. They were made for His glory. He can dispose of them as he sees fit. He can require of them what he pleases. He claims not a limited sphere, he asks not a partial homage. "The earth is his and the fulness thereof,

the sea and they that dwell therein." What a conception to the minds of those who had looked upon their Gods as ruling over a limited space; who considered them as confined to narrow bounds! Inferior to others and controlling but a handful, they were but puny powers to be worshipped by men.

This God, too, is represented as unconfined by space; he dwells not in temples made with hands. He is a Being whose presence is universal. If we ascend into heaven, he is there; if we make our bed in hell, he is there; if we take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost part of the sea, he is even there. Most absurd would it be to represent any earthly building however magnificent, as his dwelling place—to say of any temple, he is confined to it. The universe is his temple—the heavens are his throne—the earth is his footstool. He is a spirit unconfined and interminably diffused. No image of him can be formed; no resemblance produced; no statue can represent him; no picture exhibit him.

The worship, too, which is due to him, corresponds to his attributes. It is the spiritual worship of a spiritual Being; it is such as our Saviour described when he said "and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and truth." No outward homage is sufficient; no offering of gifts or victims. Costly presents and valuable sacrifices are not prized by him; they avail not in the propitiation of his favor—they secure no blessing on the offerer.—"For God who made the world, and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshiped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life and breath and all things."

No addition can be made to his happiness by what men do.—He is himself the source of every thing good; the bountiful author of untold blessings to dependent creatures, who should never be regarded as needing any thing from us to render his condition more blessed. How unlike the deities of Greece—their worshipers could only approach acceptably the gods dwelling in their temples when they came with costly sacrifices; without these, there was no favor. There must be burnt offerings and calves a year old; thousands of rams, and tens of thousands of rivers of oil; there must be first borns for transgression; the fruit of the body for the sin of the soul. Not so with the God whom Paul declared to them. He required the calves of the lips, and the sacrifice which he accepts is, the man of Calvary—Jesus Christ, his well beloved son.

Such were the views expressed in reference to God; but next in importance is man, and what is he? Whence has he come? How has his earthly destiny been regulated? What is his business—the great work which he is to perform?

On all these interesting topics the discourse of the christian orator throws a powerful light. The sages of Attica had discussed

the great question of the origin of man, and they claimed for themselves, with as little pretension to philosophy as to humility, that they had grown from the earth. Their blood was different from other men's; it had never mingled with any other people's. The language they employed was something like this: we of Attica are alone of noble birth—for we were born of the earth.* They supposed that they had grown up like plants. Moreover they were deeply prejudiced against the Jews as a people differing from them in origin and in every other respect; they regarded them as far beneath them. But what says the great teacher of Athenian senators and philosophers;—God hath made all of one blood. All men are descended from the same source; there are not different races of men, from different heads; all are descended from one man, Adam. All acknowledge a common ancestor, and all are brethren. There may be varieties in their complexion, in their mental characacteristics; various revolutions in their history; various arrangements in their earthly allotment; but all these are regulated and brought about by the supreme ruler of the universe. It is well that it is so. It was wise in the councils of God that there were not different races of men on earth. Men seem prone to wish it was otherwise; to persuade themselves, in the face of the clearest light, that it is so; for no good purpose—for purposes which would find no justification in the theories which they advocate. The identity of our origin fixes our relations to our fellow men in the firmest manner, summons us to see in every human being a son of the same Father, to whom we are indebted for our existence, calls upon us to lay aside prejudices against him; to feel interested in his welfare; to love him with the love of benevolence, when we can do no more; and with the love of gratitude and complacency, when he is deserving of it.

The Athenians, in common with others, were the creatures of God; their rise, progress and decline, were under his providential direction; they participated in the destiny for which the human family had been created.

For what were men then created; why placed under his government; why directed by his power and wisdom? That they should "seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us."

"This is the purpose, that they might seek," &c.; that is, make themselves acquainted with him; learn that he is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him, adore and obey him. This was the purpose,—but the Apostle expresses himself as if the result would be unfavorable, as if they would hardly be successful; as if they might remain ignorant of him. Why does he express himself thus? Because God is remote; because he is not clearly manifested; because our capacities are in-

* Aristophanes.

adequate to the perception of him? By no means; he is so near that we may, as it were, touch him with the hand, and hold direct intercourse with him. What are the facts; "in him we live, move and have our being." Our life is from him; our vital operations are from him; our mental and spiritual endowments are from him. In making this statement so conclusive, he assumes nothing more than had been granted by their own poets, Aratus and Cleanthes. They said, "we are his offspring;" could man, then, with any reason, consider himself the production of such deities as the Greeks worshiped? Was he not evidently the creature of a Being of a very different kind? Do not his structure and endowments turn away the mind from all idols, and fix it upon a spiritual essence of eternal existence, of omnipotent power, of omniscient knowledge, of omnipresent agency, and universal benevolence?

Such was the purpose, and such were the facilities; but how melancholy the results—they lived without hope and without God in the world. No man knew better, no one has more correctly delineated heathenism than the Apostle of the Gentiles: "because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened." Professing themselves to be wise they became fools; and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four footed beasts, and creeping things.

"Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever."

Such was their theology—their practical ethics was no better. Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful, &c.

This was the result, this the position assumed. It displays a frightful picture of human depravity, not without parallel in our own experience and observation.

Such a state of things called loudly for the vengeance of God; there was every thing to provoke forth his indignation, but it was restrained; he winked at it, overlooked it; exercised forbearance; manifested indulgence—not because he did not disapprove, but because he is slow to anger; because he willeth not the death, but the salvation of men. But what is to be done—what devolved on the hearers of Paul; what devolves upon all sinners? The question is not unanswered; the message was delivered unwelcome as it was; it is set forth in no obscure light, powerful as was the temptation. Repentance is preached on Mars Hill as well as in the hovel of the beggar, and it is enforced by all that is awaken-

ing and appalling, in the righteous judgment of the constituted arbiter of the eternal destinies of the children of men.

Idolatry must be abandoned, sin must be given up, a new heart must be obtained, the blood of Christ must be applied, holiness must be followed after. This must be realized by all, by the Stoic and the Epicurean—by the Areopagite and the ordinary citizen—by Dionysius and Damaris—all, all must repent; and if they do they shall be saved; and if they do not, they shalt be lost, for "God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world."

By that dread judgment, by that day of wrath and mercy—by heaven and hell—with all the passion inspired by the conviction that the risen Saviour would be the judge; does this great orator, this intrepid champion of the Cross, forgetting himself, unmoved by the applause or condemnation of men, urge the duty of immediate and unreserved surrender of the heart to God.

He preached not in vain, God was with him. It is true some mocked, but others believed; some refused, but others were willing. Even a few of those who might be regarded as least accessible, felt the power of the truth, and souls were given for his hire. In some there was the prejudiced mind, and they heard as if they heard not; the truth bounded back from their hearts, and they remained in their sins—but others heard with simplicity of heart, and they were enlightened; and all in that great assembly who had a love for the truth, and heard it without prejudice, had conviction flashed upon their minds, and were converted from dumb idols to serve the living God. With what emotion they left that assembly, we may describe by saying that they went down to their houses justified and rejoicing.

REINHARD'S MEMOIRS AND CONFESSIONS.

Memoirs and Confessions of Francis Volkmar Reinhard, S. T. D., Court-Preacher at Dresden. From the German. By Oliver A. Taylor. Boston, 1832.

This is a work that ought to be in the hands of every student of theology and every minister of the gospel in the land. We have often wondered that it has attracted so little attention, and cannot account for it except on the general principle, so little creditable to the boastful intelligence of every age, that books of real genius are slow in establishing themselves in popular favor. That Reinhard was a man of real genius, as well as of profound learning, is proved by almost every thing he has left behind him, voluminous as his works are. But perhaps some of our readers may inquire, 'who is the man whom you are thus extolling? for we must plead guilty of ignorance of his very name.' For the benefit of such persons, as well as by way of introduction to the notice of

the work now under consideration, we here present a brief biographical sketch of this extraordinary man.

He was born at Vohenstrauss, in the Duchy of Sulzbach, March the 12th, 1753. He early evinced an ardent thirst for knowledge, an insatiable desire to improve himself, and seemed to derive his greatest pleasure from mental occupations. Until 15 years of age he found an excellent and faithful teacher in his father, a pious and worthy clergyman of the place where he was born, by whom he was early made thoroughly acquainted with the ancient classics, especially Virgil and Cicero, and thus enabled to lay that foundation, upon which alone, in modern times, the fame of authorship, a few choice and original works of the imagination excepted, has always been raised. His father seemed always to cherish fond hopes of *being able to make something out of his son Francis*, as he used to express himself, and with this view, as his profession did not allow him sufficient leisure to continue his instructor beyond the period mentioned, sent him in 1768 to the *Gymnasium Poeticum*, at Regensburg. In this place he spent four years and an half, devoted chiefly to the study of the classics. His principal teacher was Mr. A. Töpfer, the co-rector, to whom he ever after felt the deepest gratitude, and with whom he appears to have been very intimate in after life. In 1773 Reinhard entered the university of Wittenberg, where he placed himself under the care of Professor Schmidt. It was here he made his first efforts at preaching, in the village of Dietrichsdorff. But through the influence of his friends, and particularly of the celebrated historian, Schröckh, he was induced to turn his attention to the business of teaching. He entered upon this profession at the close of his university course in 1777. For this career he seems to have possessed the highest qualifications, and it appears to have suited him in every respect, as he often declared that he never felt happier than when surrounded by his pupils and giving them instruction.—Here he continued until 1792. The departments he occupied were those of philosophy, philology, theology, preaching, and homiletics; he also acted in the capacity of Provost of the university. In 1792 he was appointed Court-preacher at Dresden, which post he occupied until his death, which occurred on the 6th of September, 1812. It is perhaps as a *preacher* that he is most deservedly celebrated, and it becomes an interesting inquiry, how did he attain that eminence? This question he has done all in his power to answer in the little volume of which the title stands at the head of this article, and for the translation of which the American public is greatly indebted to the good taste of Mr. Taylor.

"The main object," Mr. Taylor in his preface, p. vi., very justly observes, "*The main object for which these letters were written by Reinhard, was by pointing out the excellencies and*

defects of his own education, and by various hints, to show young candidates for the sacred ministry, the course they should take in preparing for it, as well as after they have entered into its sacred duties." Reinhard himself states this in his usually happy manner in the commencement of his first letter, (perhaps we ought to have stated before, that these Confessions appear in the form of letters to a friend:) "You in reality, then, take no offence at the number of my printed sermons, amounting as they do to about thirty volumes. On the other hand, you wish to know by what means I have been enabled to produce so many worth perusal, and for this purpose, request me to give you a minute account of the education I received, preparatory to becoming a minister of the gospel. You naturally expect to find many things in what I say to you, which will be useful to those just entering on the ministry, serve to guard them against various errors, and be of advantage to them in many ways. I will not deny that this may be the case. It is impossible for me to make such disclosures as you expect from me, without taking notice of the great defects of my homiletical education, and acknowledging the errors into which I have fallen;—without honestly telling you what there is in my sermons deserving of censure, and why I have not been able to approximate nearer to the perfect pattern of a sermon which lies in my mind. If I do so, from the account, young preachers will, of course, be able to draw much valuable instruction. At least, it will not be my fault, if those who take my sermons for patterns, imitate the very things they ought to avoid."

Reinhard's excuse for publishing so many sermons, would certainly be valid even though those sermons were not one of the richest legacies which the theological world has ever received. It appears that after he had established that high character as a preacher, which he ever after so ably sustained, various persons took it into their heads to take advantage of his reputation by taking down his sermons as he delivered them, and publishing them not only without his leave, but in the most mutilated forms. As the persons engaged in this were wretchedly ignorant, this is not to be wondered at. "You may believe me or not," says Reinhard, "but I could hardly recognize myself in them. I was astonished at the nonsense which was put into my mouth; and yet it was not in my power to prevent these transcripts from being taken, as the good-naturedness of the readers made it too profitable a business for the transcribers to relinquish it. I was obliged, therefore, to choose between two evils, and either see my sermons brought into general circulation in a very garbled and corrupted state, or publish them myself as they were originally delivered."

His education for the ministry commenced in his father's house, when he was still a child. True this was not intentional, but it was here, whilst listening to his father's discourses, that he formed some of those habits which most strongly characterize most of his

pulpit productions. It is deeply interesting in this way to trace effects to their real causes. "My father," he writes in his second letter, "was unanimously looked upon by all, as one of the best preachers in that region. He could not indeed rise above the faults of his age. Agreeably to the custom then prevalent, he made choice of a particular method, and selected a general theme, upon which he treated in all its relations and extent, until another year commenced. * * * Among the peculiar qualities for which his sermons were distinguished, may be named a strict and minute arrangement of every thing they contained. That this arrangement was perfectly natural and obvious at the first glance, may be inferred from the fact, that, when a lad from ten to eleven years of age, I could remember it, and write it down upon paper, on my return home. I did so, and, as I found the exercise pleased my father, for he usually examined what I had written, and corrected it whenever he found it wrong, I regularly continued this practice every Sabbath, until I had acquired such skill in this respect, that not a single topic escaped me. The result was, as you may infer, that I early formed the conception of a sermon strictly arranged, and so disposed in all its main parts, as easily to be retained in memory,—a conception, accompanied with all the allurements of paternal example, and so firmly fastened in my soul as never again to be extirpated. From this time onward, every sermon was entirely lost to me, which either had no plan, or one which I was unable to comprehend."

From his father, too, he imbibed that opinion which he maintained to the end of his life: "that the ancients were the genuine masters of poetry and eloquence, and that we must learn of them and take them for models." Not content with making him a good philologian, his father, even when he was but a boy, used to spend several hours with him every evening conversing upon some passage of an ancient work, especially Virgil and Cicero, who were his favorites. In these conversations the "sole object was to discover in what the beauty, ingeniousness, greatness, and sublimity of the passage consisted; and these were developed with a fire which entered into my heart."

His taste for poetry was developed at a very early period, and it was to this chiefly he attributed his acquaintance with his native language, and his command over it. In his ninth year, already, he read with avidity every poem upon which he could lay his hands, but his father about this time losing his library by a destructive fire, he was for a long time confined to the Sulzbach Hymn Book, Canitz's poems, and Brocke's translation of Pope's Essay on Man. In a couple of years, however, Haller fell into his hands, and thenceforward became his favorite priest of the Muses. The influence of this writer upon him is thus described by himself: (Letter II, pp. 20—21.) "It was not long before I knew my Haller by heart. Of course I imitated him; and as every thing that

I found in my admired pattern, struck me as beautiful, I was pleased with his provincialisms among the rest; as even then I was able to discover them. Indeed, I employed them in my own verses, and in the midst of the Upper Palitinate, wrote as though I was a native of Berne. What, however, was this small error in comparison with the immense advantages I derived from Haller? His train of thought was rich and full of meaning, and every word took possession of my soul. I passed by nothing without the most careful examination, and dwelt with indescribable pleasure upon every line, always expecting to find something more in it, and the numerous passages which I did not, and could not understand, only served to exalt my reverence for the poet. From this time onward I became disgusted with every thing like prolixity, exuberance of language, and tautology. Haller made me so choice of my expressions, I may say, reduced me to such poverty in this respect, that when there was no new thought to be altered either different from the preceding or designed to render it more definite, I absolutely had not another word to say. When, therefore, I reflect upon the influence exerted upon me by the poems of Haller, I am convinced, that my style derived its peculiarities particularly from them."

We have not room to trace minutely his progress in these studies, nor to dwell upon the influence which his teachers and the various authors he read exerted upon his mental and moral character, and, of course, upon his character as a theologian and a preacher. This he has done himself in a very faithful and satisfactory manner. As regards his *religious* character, it was very early developed. He unequivocally acknowledges the advantages which he derived in this respect from attendance upon the preaching of the gospel. At Regensburg, the laws of the school required them to attend church at least twice every Sunday and festival, and twice during the week. Instead of complaining of this, he declares that it was "here I found nourishment for those religious feelings which had early been excited, and by the wisest means carefully cherished in me by my father; and though attendance upon divine worship was of but little benefit to my ministerial education, it did not fail to prove a blessing to my heart." How different this from the language of those who can scarcely bear the idea of attending such services at all! How many young men in our literary institutions seem to think it a hardship, or loss of time, or unmanly subjection, where the regulations of their *alma mater* require their attendance upon such instructions two or three hours in the week! "As regards my own personal edification," he continues, "I cannot recollect a period in my life in which I altogether neglected it. It was a matter of necessity for me to collect my thoughts together and reflect upon my personal condition. * * * It is impossible for any one to be accustomed at an earlier age, to look upon the Bible as the book of all books, than

I was. I commenced learning to read with the Proverbs of Solomon, which were printed with distinct syllables for the sake of children—when a child of five years of age I began to read the Bible.—I ran to my Bible, therefore, whenever I wished for instruction, animation, or comfort; and as I found every thing in it that I wanted, in great abundance, I never once thought of seeking after other means of edification."

It is with difficulty we refrain from giving entire the whole of his sixth letter, every sentence of which is replete with interest to the theological student, but this is now out of the question, as we have already occupied our readers' time long enough. The eighth is equally interesting to the preacher—indeed all the subsequent letters deserve the most serious attention from every man who aims at pleading the cause of religion, as "a workman that need not be ashamed." We dismiss the whole subject with the following judicious reflections by the translator, hoping that they will be sufficient to induce all our candidates for the ministry especially, to possess themselves of a work of which they have too long been destitute, if they do not yet possess it:

"Coming as these letters do, from one of the most distinguished preachers of his age, they must be deserving of attention in this respect. Will not some, on reading what is said in the sixth letter about eloquence, discover, that they have hitherto had wrong conceptions of it, and been unable even to define it? Will they not be compelled to admit, that they have often spoken in tones of thunder, when they should have spoken in tones of sympathy and tenderness; and by their manner excited strong suspicions of hypocrisy, when they thought themselves exhibiting the strongest proofs of sincerity? Will not some, on reading what Reinhard says about the study of the poets, find they have almost entirely neglected it, and hence, failed to use the best means possible, for cultivating susceptibility of emotion, without which, genuine eloquence cannot exist? And may I not hope, that they will hereafter follow his example, and apply themselves to Milton, Shakspeare, Cowper, and even the imperfect English translation of Klopstock's Messiah? — a work, which by its spirit throws more light upon some passages of the Gospels, than half the commentaries which have ever been written. And may not some when they read what Reinhard says of the importance of general literature to a preacher of the Gospel, find that they are quite deficient in this respect? Those upon whom this work produces any such effects, will soon perceive that little time enough is allowed the young disciple for a preparatory course, and that all systematic study should not be brought to a close, as it too generally is, as soon as a man is comfortably settled in the ministry. I hope that the motives which have dictated these remarks, will not be misapprehended. That they are well founded, those who reflect upon the subject, will, I fear, find too much reason to believe. I know the ambassador of the cross is not at liberty to turn aside into the field of literature, to pluck a single useless flower. With every branch of study, however which bears upon the business intrusted to his hands, qualifies him to a greater or less degree, for detecting the sophisms upon which error is founded, and enables him to trace the truth back *through nature up to nature's God*, he should be intimately acquainted."

HOMILETICS.

(No. II.)

It has been doubted whether canons of value in regard to preaching, can be given. The importance of preaching is admitted, but the opinion seems to be entertained by some, that good sense is a sufficient guide in determining what are its appropriate elements, and how they are to be combined. If the correctness of this view could be conceded, our labors might at once cease, and to him who enquired, what must be done in order to render effective my education in the exhibition of religious truth? it might be replied, follow the dictates of good sense. Questioning the soundness of this course, it may not be useless to unfold to some extent the science of homiletics, or in other words, to point out the aim of the evangelical minister, in communicating truth, the limits within which he should confine himself, and the form which he should prefer.

Some men have preached eloquently without any special study of Homiletics, just as some have become distinguished orators, without the ordinarily prescribed training; but cases of this kind no more prove that there are no principles adapted to aid the orator whether sacred or secular, than the fact that Homer produced his immortal Epics before Rhetoric became a science—proves that Aristotle and his followers in the same field, labored in vain when they laid down the doctrines of their rhetorical productions.

If homiletics are useless because some have preached well without the study of them, logic is useless, because some have reasoned well without having studied it; Metaphysics are valueless, because some have manifested intimate acquaintance with the mind, who were not tutored in the systems which have authority in the schools. Homiletics take from every branch of study whatever may be useful for their purpose, and direct it to the designed end. It involves principles of logic, rhetoric, and mental philosophy. If there be a difference between preachers—if some present religion more effectively than others, it can only be accounted for so far as the discourse itself is concerned, by the contents, the language and arrangement of it. Delivery is unquestionably highly conducive to the production of the desired results, and this constitutes an essentinl part of the science. How much this depends on proper instruction and diligence in practice, according to judicious directions, must be known to every one. Surprising changes are often effected in very unpromising cases, by suitable advice, followed by careful practice. How much Demosthenes accomplished by his unwearied efforts to remove natural impediments to success in the vocation to which he devoted himself, is known to all, and deserves to be remembered by every one who would attain

eminence in sacred oratory. "If," says Dr. Campbell, "nothing else is meant by eloquence, in the use of all the wisest and best who have written on the subject, but that art or talent, whereby the speech is adapted to produce in the hearer the great end which the speaker has, or at least ought to have, principally in view, it is impossible to doubt the utility of the study, unless people will be absurd enough to question, whether there be any difference between speaking *to* the purpose and speaking *from* the purpose, expressing one's self intelligibly or unintelligibly, reasoning in a manner that is conclusive and satisfactory, or in such a way as can convince nobody; fixing the attention and moving the affections of an audience, or leaving them in a state perfectly listless and unconcerned."

Believing that enough has been presented on this point, the enquiry may be instituted, what is to be understood by the term homiletics? It is employed to convey the same ideas which are frequently embraced by the phrase "art of preaching," or pulpit eloquence. "The composition of a sermon," is another mode of speaking which has been employed to designate the same thing. The term homiletics has been derived from the Germans. By them it was deduced from the word ομιλια, *a homily*, or religious discourse. The manner in which they use the word "*Homiletik*," may be learned from the following passage translated from *Anleitung zum Religions-Unterricht in Predigten und Amtsreden*, of the celebrated Niemeyer: "The great business of the minister of the gospel is preaching. A peculiar character is given to his discourses by the religion he teaches and the ends at which he aims. It is religion, in the noblest sense of the word, that he communicates; it is religious knowledge and affections which he is to produce and sustain. His hearers consist properly of such as are capable of being profited, and who desire religious experience. The communication of instruction in a continuous and protracted discourse, is called preaching. Homiletics may be regarded as the method of properly constructing such religious addresses."

On the utility of homiletics, he cites that Quintilian who said, "Pectus est quod disertum facit"—as saying, "They may enjoy their belief, who think that it is enough for a man to be born an orator, only let them pardon us who believe that there is no perfection except where nature is aided by care."

Amongst the best writers on this subject since the middle of the 18th century, are Mosheim, Ammon, Niemeyer, and Schott. In the English language, there is much deficiency in this department of literature. The best known works are Fenelon and Claude, translated from the French; Campbell's Treatise on Pulpit Eloquence, and Porter's Homiletics. Of these, the last named work approximates more nearly than the other English treatises, to a systematic discussion of the subject. On extemporaneous preaching, an interesting little work has been given to the christian ministry of the United States, by Professor Ware, of Cambridge.—

This clear and able discussion of a much mooted question, deserves to be read by every minister and candidate for the ministry, as affording a strong argument for unwritten discourses and invaluable directions for acquiring the art *ex tempore dicendi.*

MORNING SACRIFICE.

When the dew is on the clover,
At the summer's early dawn,
What a fragrance wanders over
All the fresh and verdant lawn.

Day has not another minute
Rich with such ambrosial sweet—
Noon-tide has no perfume in it
Can with morning's breath compete.

Eve may give its opening flowers,
But their odors all are poor
To Aurora's fairy bowers,
Formed the senses to allure.

So young hearts, when early given
To the service of the skies,
Softened by the dews of heaven,
As a sweet memorial rise.

After-life, tho' long, can never
Offer incense to the Lord
Like the heart's first warm endeavor,
Reaching for the high reward.

Manhood may present its treasure,
Later life its tribute bring—
E'en old age may feebly measure
Out its scanty offering—

But tho' all have approbation,
Where no gift is met with scorn,
None are like the sweet oblation
Of the heart's fresh, dewy morn.

C. W. T.

BIBLICAL CRITICISM.—No. 2.

MATT. v, 2.

THE phrase, "he opened his mouth," has very much exercised the ingenuity of critics. Whether the original Greek is to be considered in accordance with classic or Hebraistic usage, has been disputed between the purists and the Hebraists. Beza, Vorstius and Gataeker contend for a Hebraistic origin. On the other hand, Georgi, as cited by Tholuck, in his vindiciæ N. T. l. III, c. 4. §45, shews that profane writers, such as Isocrates and Demosthenes use in the same sense ανειν το στομα, and Balth. Stolberg cites Aeschylus and Sophocles as employing in a similar sense οιγειν, εκλυειν το στομα. Tholuck states, in his masterly work on the sermon on the mount, that recent critics consider the phrase, pleomastic, viz: Rosenmüller, Schleusner, and Kuinœl.

This is, however, not in accordance with the views of still more recent philologians.

From an early period, the phrase has been considered emphatic. Chrysostom remarks, and his ability to appreciate the force of the original, may unhesitatingly be conceded, that as "and taught," follows the words "he opened his mouth"—the implication is, that he taught when he was silent. He was always teaching,—sometimes by his actions, at other times by his words. A beautiful idea which ought to be realized in every christian, most fully realized in our blessed Redeemer.

Luther connects with it the triple rule for preachers, which he lays down likewise in another place: *Tritt frisch auf, thu's Maul auf hör bald auf*, and elucidates the "opening of the mouth" as a bold, fearless proclamation of the truth: "*dürre herausgesagt, niemand angesehen noch gescheut, es treffe wen oder was es wolle.*"

Tholuck, who has furnished in the work cited above, the remarks from Luther, says, that it is not synonymous with he spake. It is employed where it is designed to impart the idea of solemnity or importance in reference to what is said. It gives emphasis to the term with which it is connected. See Job III, 1. XXXII, 20. Acts VIII, 35. X, 34. It sometimes implies speaking aloud, and with boldness; See Proverbs XXXI, 8, 9. Ezekiel III, 27. XXXIII, 22. Sirach XVIII, 5. XX, 14. XXIV, 2. 2 Cor. VI, 11. comp: (Kara begaron,) Isaiah LVIII, 9. "Cry aloud," or, "with the throat," which involves an undismayed and confident proclamation of the truth.

The remark of Pellicanus may be, says Tholuck, correct in regard to its use in this place. Says P., "this mode of speaking leads to the expectation of a protracted, disclosure and subordinate to this, one of great moment."

AN ATTEMPT TO ELUCIDATE CERTAIN PASSAGES OF ROMAN HISTORY.

AUDI ALTERAM PARTEM.

HISTORY has been emphatically called *lux veritatis*,* its first law has been declared to be *ne quid falsi audeat dicere.* † The value of historical studies cannot be too highly estimated, but wherever a falsehood has crept into accredited history, the waters of life are poisoned at the source, and he who honestly endeavors to point out the error, merits thanks for his good intentions even should he fall short in his attempt. "I should think that man," says Berkely, "who spent his time in a painful, impartial search after truth, a

* Cic. De Orat. II. 9. † ibid 15.

better friend to mankind than the greatest statesman or hero, the advantage of whose labors is confined to a little part of the world and a short space of time, whereas a ray of truth may enlighten the whole world and extend to future ages." * The design of these humble observations on a well known period of history—on a few personages whose names are "familiar in our mouths as household words," on whose characters probably the reader's mind has long been made up, is to call on him to reconsider the evidence on which his opinion rests, and if he shall find the verdict has been hastily given, we shall move for a new trial. "Subjects once monopolized by poets," it has been well observed, "are with difficulty reclaimed by sober history; where fairies have danced their mystic rings, flowers may spring, but grass will never grow." Nay, the attempt to restore history to her proper throne is almost certain to excite hostility; the votary of truth is called a cold blooded critic and charged with pruning away the blossoms of the classics. Far from us be such profanity, let them be considered as mere poetic properties,

Alcandrumque, Haliumque, Noemonaque, Prytanimque,

and may they flourish forever.

——— Pictoribus atque poetis
Quid libet audendi, etc.

and we will be the last to desecrate the charmed circle. But when we look for history, and find in its stead mere "pragmatism," myths and poetic fables with the metre and rhetorical figures sublimated, we have a right to protest. Yet so has too much of what is called history, been written, and the student, even now in the nineteenth century, has to begin all anew, neglecting the Humes and Plutarchs, the Robertsons and the Goldsmiths, *et hoc genus omne* to recur wherever possible to contemporaneous documents, and to dig truth, the pearl of great price, from under the mass of rubbish which has been piled upon it.

Whose reputation seems more firmly established than that of the stoical assassin of the first Cæsar? Has he not been held up as a model of disinterested, unsullied patriotism; as one who would not for the world "contaminate his fingers with base bribes?" has not his name been for ages, in company with those of Harmodius and Aristogeiton, the theme of the orator's declamation, the burden of the poet's song? His fame may be found to have no firmer foundation than theirs.

Has the reader ever asked himself whether the assassination of Cæsar was likely to be a benefit to his country; or has he rested contented in theo pinion of the herd that Cæsar was a *tyrant*, without a moment's reflection on the application of the odious term? To answer the question satisfactorily, it will be necessary to go

* Min. Phil. Dia I. §2.

back a little and enquire what had been the condition of Rome before Cæsar's supremacy; what were the public liberties which the tyrant subverted; whether the fac tbe not that the state (from the unprincipled oppressions of the very party whom Cæsar drove from power, and who yelped out liberty over the corse of "the foremost man of all the world,") was reduced to so wretched a condition, that the government of the Russian knout or the Turkish bowstring might have been hailed as a deliverance.

Cicero's first public oration, *Pro Roscio Amerino*, for example, reveals a scene of iniquity, we trust, seldom parallelled in any civilized country. Sextius Roscius was the proprietor of large estates at Ameria, a municipium in Umbria. He had espoused the party of Sylla, and therefore had nothing to dread from him.—Months had elapsed since the time of the proscriptions. Those whom fear had driven away were returning to their homes, and Roscius was living, as he had been accustomed, quietly at Rome, committing the care of his property at Ameria, to his only surviving son. But two kinsmen of his coveted his estate, and conspired with Chrysogonus, a freedman of Sylla, to obtain possession of it. Roscius was assassinated in the streets of Rome; his property was seized under pretence of the proscription, though his name had never been in the list of the proscribed, and the worthy kinsmen and Chrysogonus shared the spoils between them. The son fled penniless to the house of a lady at Rome, named Cœcilia, who generously afforded him shelter. The murderers of the father finding the son beyond the reach of their daggers, and not feeling perfectly secure with "the price of iniquity," so long as he lived, had the hardihood to accuse him of the murder of his father, and to bring him to a public trial, having secured the aid of a venal orator named Eruius, to conduct their cause.* The monstrous charge was unsupported by a tittle of evidence, but poor and friendless how could young Roscius hope to escape the horrid punishment the Roman laws awarded for such a crime! None of the courageous senators of Rome dared step between the oppressor and his victim; nay, it is to be feared the examples of too many of them countenanced the enormity. Erucius felt so confident of victory, that he made scarcely any effort to secure it. His speech, it is expressly said, might have been spoken on some other occasion,† and having concluded it, he was chatting unconcernedly with those around him, paying no attention to what the young man was saying, who had now risen to address the court, till he hears him utter the word Chrysogonus. Thunderstruck (and his surprize is almost ludicrous,‡) he finds that this young man whose insignificance had caused him to be overlooked,§ when the usual speakers were secured, no other than Cicero himself, had presumed

* Roscius was obliged to have a guard even in the court to protect him. § 5. 13

† Ex alia oratione. § 82. ‡ § 22. (60.) § § 21. (59.)

to undertake the defence of the destined victim, and brave the wrath of the redoubtable Chrysogonus, to whom messengers were immediately despatched to carry the intelligence. Noble and triumphant was the defence, though we see from almost every line of it that Cicero was quite sensible of the danger he was incurring, and indeed he appears to have found it prudent to quit the city almost immediately, and spend two years at Athens. Roscius was saved from the rack and the Tiber, but it does not appear that he ever recovered a foot of the estate. At what rate shall we value the liberties of the virtuous republic, as the miserable oligarchical faction loved to call it, where law and justice could be thus outraged with impunity and profit? Should any one be disposed to delude himself into the belief that this was a solitary instance in an extraordinary time, we will recommend to him the diligent perusal of Cicero, more particularly of his epistles, and we believe he will find the latter days of the republic replete with oppressions unparalleled in the worst days of the worst of the emperors. We believe he will find venality and corruption universal, from the consuls* downward, that bribery of a kind unheard of before or since (*noctes mulierum atque adloscentulorum nobilium introductiones*†) could be employed for the purposes of faction; that the election at Rome appears to have been occasionally determined by herds of voters brought up from Gaul;‡ in a word, that the satirist's indignant exclamation,

———— Omnia Romae
Cum pretio ——— §

was at least as applicable to the times we are speaking of, as to any period of the history. We shall sum up this part of our subject in the words of Hooke:

"The triumvirs cannot be said to have made attempts on the Roman constitution or indeed on any legal authority or government. Anarchy prevailed. We have seen senators the most celebrated by historians for their patriotism, employing themselves in the infamous practices of corrupting judges, and suborning false witnesses: we have seen a daring ruffian threatening a full senate with destruction, and yet suffered by the senate, peaceably to go and put himself at the head of an army that was to effect that destruction; yet we have seen the same senate, assume a lawless power of putting citizens of the first rank to death without previous trial and condemnation: we have seen them presume to suspend a tribune of the people from the exercise of his office, and openly by a common purse practise that bribery|| they had so

* Ad. Att. IV. 18, ad. 2. Prat III, 1. † Ad. Att. I. 16. ‡ Ad. Att. I. 1.

§ Juv. III. 183.

|| *Plerique pecunias contulerunt ne Catone quidem abnuenteeam largitionem e republica fieri. Suetonius.* i. e. That Bibulus might be able to bribe the electors and share the consulship with Cæsar.

often condemned as ruinous to the state. Cato, that stout champion of the laws, we have seen him a riotous magistrate violating the privileges of the tribuneship, in the person of one of his colleagues, and from hatred to Cæsar approving of bribery and corruption in the election of magistrates, after he had himself prosecuted Muræna for a breach of the laws in that particular, and lastly Cicero, the consummate patriot, pleading in defiance of his own reason and conscience, against punishing or even calling to account judges notoriously guilty of selling the most iniquitous decrees."

(To be continued.)

LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC INTELLIGENCE.

Popular Exposition of the sacred scriptures, designed for the use of families, S. Schools and Bible Classes: Dr. Morris and Rev. C. A. Smith of Baltimore, propose publishing a work with this title. The well known character and ability of these gentlemen is ample assurance that it will be a valuable accession to our libraries. We insert their Prospectus entire, hoping that the work will speedily make its appearance. "The first volume, contaning the gospel of Matthew and Mark is expected to be publishd about the first of June or July next. The plan of this work is in many respects new. The chapters are divided into sections, each section embracing a distinct subject; instead of having the texts arranged at the head of each page, each text precedes the exposition that belongs to it; at the close of each section or chapter are practical remarks designed to awaken profitable trains of thought; and at the bottom of each page are questions intended not only for Sunday Schools or Bible Classes, but also are useful exercise in the family circles when the scriptures are read morning and evening. The plan of this work, has been suggested by several popular German works of a similar character, particularly those of Starke and Brandt, both of whom are strictly evangelical in sentiment, and have displayed a profound knowledge of the word of God. But whilst the compilers have taken these works as their models, they have availed themselves of all the materials within their reach, and have not hesitated to make free use of Doddridge, Henry, Scott, Clarke, Rosenmüller, &c. The work will be adapted to general use, and it is believed it will find favor among all evangelical denominations.

Terms, &c. — The Gospel of Matthew and Mark, will form a neat octavo volume, of clearly printed matter, containing about 300 pages, and will be sold at $1 00 or $1 25."

STEAMBOATS.—"Time and tide," says the London Quarterly, "once waited for no man—now no one waits for them. Science has, at last, ended the quarrel which since the beginning had existed between fire and water, and by the union, or *belle alliance*, of these two furious elements, she has created that gigantic power—steam." These vessels have not only made their way round the Cape of Good Hope to India, where the new power is regularly plying on the Ganges—they have successfully crossed the Atlantic. This voyage of more than 3000 miles is now regularly, and as a matter of course, made from London or Liverpool to New York, in the space of little more than a fortnight, so that we now begin to look for the news by the Great Western or the British Queen in the same way that we expect that by the eastern or the western mail. Arrangements are also said to be making for carrying on the trade across the isthmus of Darien, in connexion with the steamers plying on the Pacific ocean between Valparaiso and Panama, a distance of some 2500 miles; so that the voyage around Cape Horn, which has hitherto occupied upwards of four months, will be made in thirty days. In the Mediterranean steam vessels are used by Christians, Jews and Turks. They are also beginning to run regularly from India to England by way of Egypt, in defiance of the Monsoon, the current, the intricate navigation of the Red Sea, reducing a voyage of nine months to about as many weeks. The number of steamers radiating from London to almost every point of the compass, is scarcely credible. They run from the various ports of England to Calais, Boulogne, Havre, Dieppe, Granville, St. Malo, Dublin, Bordeaux, Rotterdam, Cologne, Manheim, and to almost every town and village on the Rhine. On the continent of Europe they run regularly to Antwerp, Ostend, Hamburg, Zwolle, Amsterdam, &c., across the lakes of Switzerland and Italy, on the Danube and Po; from Drontheim to Hammerfest, far within the Polar circle, in latitude 70°—from Stockholm to Tornea the most northern town in Europe. But it is in this country steam has gained its greatest victories. Thirty years ago there was but one steamboat in the United States, now there are not far from 800! Mr. David Stevenson states that abreast of N. Orleans may be seen numerous tiers of steamboats, of gigantic dimensions, just arrived from, or preparing to start for, the upper countries, through which passes the Mississippi whose tributary streams it is said would in length twice encircle the globe. Mr. S. says, 'at every hour, I had almost said at every minute of the day, they fire off their signal guns and dash away at a rate which makes me giddy even to think of.' Steamers were first introduced on the Mississippi in 1811; and by 1831, 348 had been built for the navigation of the western waters." The great North American lakes, or rather seas of fresh water, are covered with them—Lake Erie alone is traversed by 50 or more, each of which can carry from 200 to 700 tons burden.

POLITICAL CONDITION OF THE WORLD.

ENGLAND.—The rapid and steady extension of British power is one of the most remarkable events recorded in history. At the commencement of the christian era, the inhabitants of the British Isles were not only out of the pale of civilization, but almost unknown as a fragment of the great family of nations. Ten centuries later the Normans invaded and subdued it with as little ceremony or difficulty as we experience from the Indian tribes of our own (so called) territory. Several centuries later, the English had indeed begun to overrun France, where they held several dukedoms in right of their Norman conquerors, but they had not yet subdued Ireland, and Scotland was still an independent and rival kingdom. But since the seventeenth century, England has advanced with gigantic strides to a height of power scarcely paralleled. Her North American possessions, though diminished by the independence of the United States, still stretch over an immense extent of fertile territory; in South America she has several fine provinces, and some of the finest of the West-India Islands, with a population of upwards of a million, are her most devoted subjects. Having possessed herself of Southern Africa and established a colony high up on the western coast, she bids fair to acquire the dominion of the greater part of the continent. But it is in Asia that she has made the most astonishing acquisitions. Here her empire has extended from a single fort to the whole peninsula of Hindoostan, and east of that to Burmah, and west to—no one can say how far; her army is now on the borders of Persia, and the next step may be to push her conquests through that country to the banks of the Euphrates. We say nothing of the various islands from New-Holland to Malta, of which she holds possession, but the naval power by means of which she has been enabled to do this, is an arm of strength that has been acquiring strength every day. Of her internal affairs, we have not now room to speak, but it appears pretty plain that with a constitutional government, liberal administration (for even if the Melbourne ministry is ejected to day and a Tory one formed, the Whigs would come into power before a year had expired,) manufactures of every kind carried to perfection, and a commerce that carries these to every corner of the globe, her prosperity must be as great as often falls to the lot of mortals.

FRANCE—This country, which has for the last half century been rocked by the earthquakes of revolution, seems gradually settling down under a constitutional government. Louis Philip I. though so often threatened by the dagger of the assassin, and by the plots of the ultra-republicans on the one hand, and of the ultra-monarchists, the friends of Charles X. on the other, still manages to preserve his life and hold the reins of government with a steady hand. No doubt he is anxious to establish his own power even to the injury of the constitution he has sworn to support, but this is a matter now out of the question. Indeed the fact that he has had to change his ministry every few months and at last to form one headed by M. Thiers, shows that he understands his position, and feels that absolute power is now extinct in France. Yet that country is still suffering from the numerous evils introduced by civil dissensions and foreign wars, and it will be a long time before the ignorance and poverty of the great mass of the nation are removed. Still the elements of reform are at work there—they have security of person and property, liberty of religion and the press, and not a few enlightened statesmen and zealous christians, who may prove "the salt of the earth," and purify and regenerate their countrymen. Having taken possession of Algiers, France has opened a colony in the northern part of Africa which will not only give an outlet to large masses of her restless population, but likewise increase her commerce and naval power, and ultimately make her mistress of the Mediterranean Sea and of all Northern Africa to the Great Desert.

RUSSIA, still pursues her aggressive and conquering career. Poland seems not only blotted from the list of nations, but almost emptied of its original inhabitants, thousands of whom are now shivering as exiles in the cold regions of Siberia, or pining as slaves in the damp and dreary mine. Turkey seems like a fascinated bird just ready to stand quietly whilst the insidious foe winds his folds around it. Persia is but little better off, and the hardy mountaineers of the Caucasus carry on a hopeless struggle against their oppressors who are only maddened by a resistance, which although partially successful, is altogether hopeless. Russia has been extending her limits on every side, ever since the accession of Peter the Great. She

now seems preparing to dispute the empire of Eastern Asia with Great Britain, her recent declaration of war against Khiva being regarded as merely a cloak for the collection of an army in the neighborhood of Affghanistan, and it is not by any means impossible that she might succeed in such a struggle. Should she acquire those immense and fertile realms, the cause of human freedom, and even of religious improvement, might almost be despaired of, were it not for the certainty that so unwieldy an empire, like all despotism centering in a single man, must ultimately fall to pieces.

HOLLAND and BELGIUM having at length submitted to the terms dictated to them by the great powers of Europe, return, according to the genius of their inhabitants, to the steady cultivation of the arts of peace. Belgium seems disposed to pursue a liberal policy in regard to religion. Holland is somewhat agitated by quarrels between the king and his loving subjects, in consequence of the former having accumulated an immense debt by his obstinate resistance to Belgiam independence, and also for proposing, at an advanced age, to marry a wife, who, as a Belgian and a Catholic, is doubly odious to the Dutch.

GREECE appears to be in a very unsettled condition. The European correspondent of the N. Y. Observer, says: "Its king Otho, a poor German and a Catholic, was imposed upon the Greeks by the great powers of Europe. This king Otho, who was sixteen years old when he mounted the throne, and who did not even know the language of the people he was to govern, is in an unsettled position. The descendants of the Athenians and Spartans do not look upon him as their real king. The Russian party, which is powerful in Greece, is opposed to this prince, and labors actively for his overthrow. A conspiracy skilfully planned and reckoning accomplices of a high order, was to have broken out the 13th of last January, (the 1st of January, according to the Greek calendar.) The conspirators had taken the name of philorthodox (friends of orthodoxy) because they designed to compel Otho to embrace the Greek religion or to resign his crown. Orthodoxy was evidently only a pretext or mask of the conspirators. In reality they had political views, and if they hid them under the cloak of religion, it was because they hoped by this means to engage in their favor the priests and the people. The conspiracy was discovered. Many men of distinguished rank are in prison. They will certainly be punished, but this punishment will only serve to deepen the resentment against Otho. I may be deceived, but I believe that this petty king will sooner or later be forced to trace his way back to Bavaria."

TURKEY presents a very interesting spectacle. The reforming sultan Mahmood II. having, after a very unfortunate and stormy reign, during which he lost several provinces in the neighborhood of Russia and Austria, all Southern Greece, and to all intents and purposes, Egypt and Syria, having paid the debt of nature, and left his dominions to a boy of some sixteen years of age, his ministers seemed disposed to carry on the work which he left unfinished. Accordingly they have given something like a constitution to the empire, and promise equal protection to all ranks of subjects without distinction of descent or religion. Unfortunately, they are entangled by Russian policy which alienates them from those European powers that would prove their best friends, and there is reason to fear that this worn out despotism will only give place to the more vigorous and more hateful one of the Czars.

EGYPT, under the energetic government of Mehemet Ali, has assumed a place among the nations of the earth. After having been for centuries a mere province of the Roman, Greek and Turkish empires, and almost reduced to a desert by the destructive influence of Tyranny, it is now the seat of an empire as extensive as it ever was under the Pharaohs or Ptolemies. It has extended south to Abyssinia, across the Red Sea into Arabia, and east over Syria to the very banks of the Euphrates, and has a naval force superior to that of many European powers. European diplomacy is now exerting itself to keep him in nominal dependence upon the Turkish empire, to compel him to restore Syria and the fleet that has deserted to him, but there is no doubt that as long as he lives he will retain his acquisitions and transmit them to his family.